

Slow Down Move Over & Emergency Vehicles

Key Messages

This electronic toolkit is a road safety resource intended to educate and inform Ontarians on the Slow Down Move Over legislation and how to respond to emergency vehicles on the road.

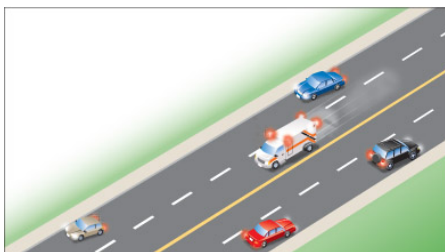
All road users are responsible for **adopting safe and courteous behaviour** on our roads so that everyone gets home safely.

The contents of this toolkit are shareable.

Everyday, police, fire and ambulance vehicles respond to urgent calls. Any time lost getting to an emergency could mean the difference between life and death. Emergency service providers and tow truck operators working roadside are at greater risk of collision. As a driver, you can do your part to help save lives.

Reacting to an approaching emergency vehicle

- Take lights and sirens seriously. Clear the way! Signal, pull to the right and stop. It's the law.
- When an emergency vehicle is approaching from either direction and you;
 - see red or red and blue flashing lights, or
 - hear bells or sirens



You must immediately

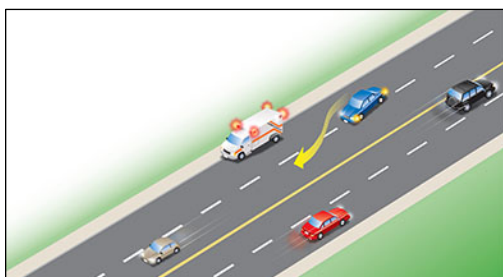
- slow down
 - move as far to the right side of the roadway as you can, and
 - stop
- If you are in a roundabout when an emergency vehicle approaches, exit at your intended exit and proceed beyond the traffic island before pulling over. If you have not entered the roundabout yet, pull over to the right if possible and wait until the emergency vehicle has passed. Never stop in the roundabout.

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- If you are in an intersection and preparing to make a turn when an emergency vehicle is approaching, you should abandon the turn and clear the intersection by proceeding straight when safe to do so, then pull to the right and stop.

Approaching a stopped emergency vehicle

- The safety of all road users is a priority. Drivers are advised to slow down and move over when passing any potential hazard along the roadway.
- When passing stopped emergency vehicles and tow trucks on the side of the road with flashing lights activated,



You must immediately

- slow down
 - signal and check your blind spot before you change lanes
 - safely move over a lane, if possible, to leave as much space as possible between you and the stopped vehicle.
- Deaths from roadside collisions are a tragedy. Safety for tow truck drivers and emergency responders remains an important safety focus.
 - Emergency vehicles – police, fire, ambulance and special public-utility emergency vehicles – are easily identified through their use of flashing red or blue lights, a siren or bell.
 - Be aware that police, fire and ambulance services use many different types of vehicles, such as bicycles, snowmobiles, all-terrain vehicles, motorcycles, buses and trucks.
 - Firefighters and volunteer medical responders may display a flashing green light when using their own vehicles to respond to a fire or medical emergency. Please be courteous and yield the right-of-way to help them reach the emergency quickly and safely.

Approaching workers on the road or at roadside

- When approaching construction zone or someone working on the road, proceed with caution and obey all warning signs, people and/or devices that are directing traffic through the area. Often, lower speed limits are posted to increase worker safety and reflect increased road hazards.

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- Always slow down and pass with caution to prevent a collision. If safe to do so, move over a lane to increase the space between your vehicle and the hazard.
- Sometimes traffic in one direction must wait while vehicles from the other direction pass through a detour. If your lane is blocked and no one is directing traffic, yield to the driver coming from the opposite direction. When the way is clear, move slowly and carefully around the obstacle.

Did You Know?

In Ontario, **flashing red, blue and green lights are limited to certain vehicles**. By law, emergency and certain enforcement vehicles can use **flashing red** and **red blue lights**.

- Certain volunteer responder groups, such as medical and firefighters, can use **flashing green lights** while proceeding to an emergency.
- **Flashing blue lights** are permitted for snow-removal equipment.

No special privileges are associated with purple, white or amber lights.

These lights let other drivers know that greater caution is required when approaching these vehicles. These lights are not regulated under the *Highway Traffic Act* (HTA).

- **Purple lights** are generally used for funeral processions.
- **Amber lights** are generally used to provide cautionary lighting by construction equipment, tow trucks, and municipal service vehicles (garbage trucks, utility services vehicles, road maintenance vehicles).

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Penalties

Drivers can be charged if they do not slow down, or move over when safe to do so, near emergency vehicles or tow trucks that are stopped with sirens or lights flashing.

First offence:

- \$400 to \$2,000
- 3 demerit points upon conviction
- possible suspension of driver's licence for up to 2 years

Subsequent offences (within 5 years):

- \$1,000 to \$4,000
- 3 demerit points upon conviction
- possible jail time (up to 6 months)
- possible suspension of driver's licence for up to 2 years

It is illegal to follow a fire vehicle or ambulance responding to a call, within 150 metres.

In community safety zones and construction zones where workers are present, fines for speeding are **doubled**.

It is also an offence to disobey STOP or SLOW signs displayed by a traffic-control person or firefighter.



Slow Down Move Over & Emergency Vehicles

By the numbers

1,835

convictions under the
'slow down, move
over' law in 2018



30%

of emergency responders
and road workers killed or
injured were struck while
assisting motorists or
working roadside*



*between 2006 and 2015

Slow Down Move Over & Emergency Vehicles

Digital

Digital Publications

OPP videos



[Move Over – Two-lane roads](#)

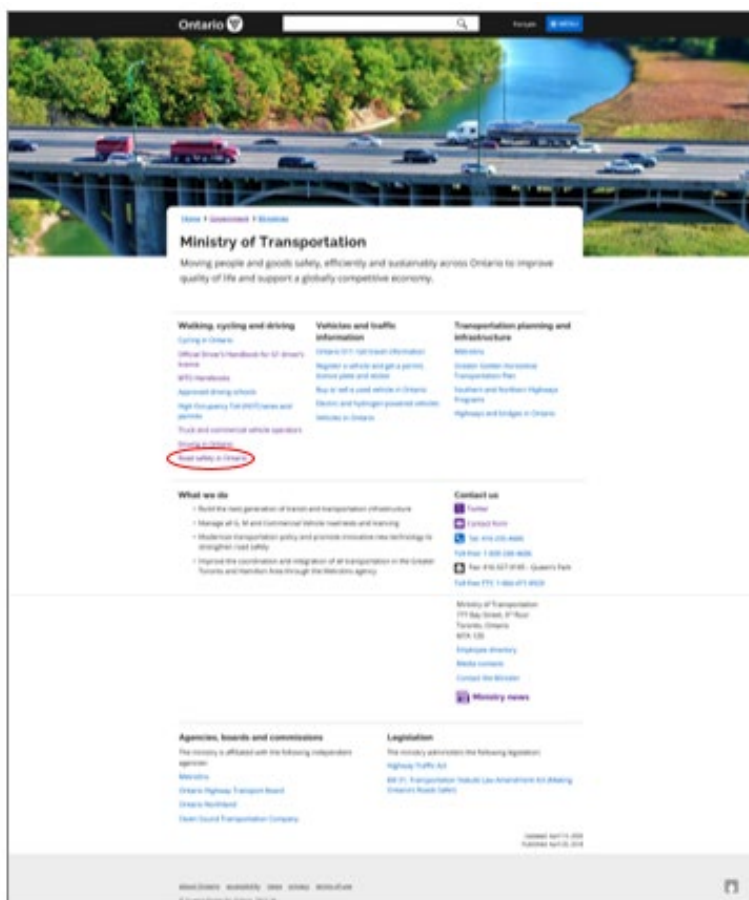
[Move Over – Multi-lane roads](#)

The Official Ministry of Transportation Driver's Handbook



[Dealing with particular situations](#)

Website



- 1 Visit [Ontario.ca/transportation](https://ontario.ca/transportation)
- 2 Select [Road Safety in Ontario](#)
- 3 Go to [Emergency Vehicles](#)

Slow Down Move Over & Emergency Vehicles

Social Media

Re-tweet, like and share on your social media channels:

Release Date August 31, 2020

Social Copy Stay alert on the highway and look out for emergency vehicles with their lights flashing. Slow down and move over to give them room. It's the law. Learn more: <http://mto.gov.on.ca/english/safety/emergency-vehicles.shtml>

Shareable

**Slow down, move over
for emergency
vehicles**



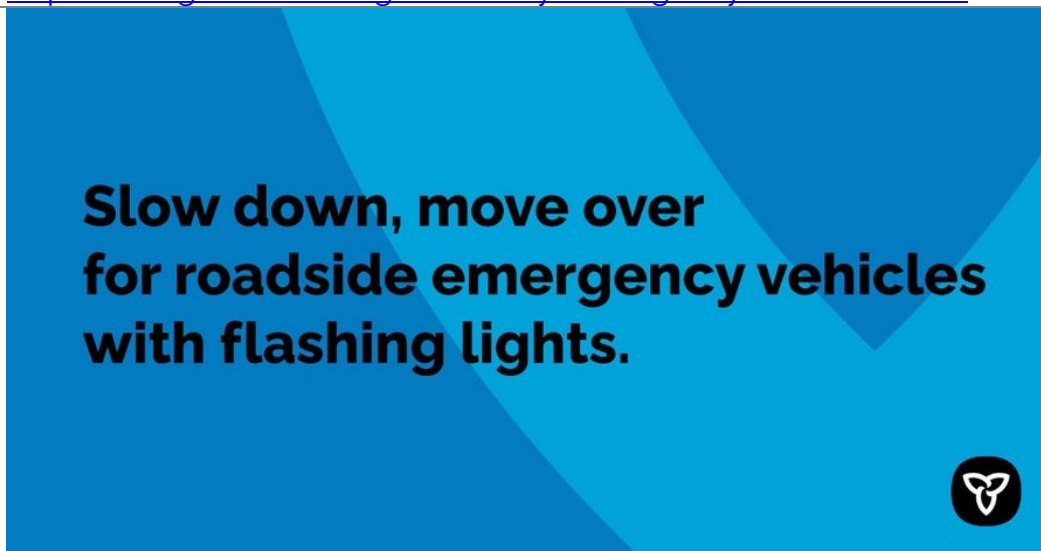
Link <https://twitter.com/ONtransport/status/1300433313077891073?s=20>

Release Date August 24, 2020

Social Copy Drivers who fail to slow down and proceed with caution when passing an emergency vehicle with flashing lights on the side of the highway risk fines from \$490 to \$2,000 and three demerit points. Learn more: <http://mto.gov.on.ca/english/safety/emergency-vehicles.shtml>

Shareable

**Slow down, move over
for roadside emergency vehicles
with flashing lights.**



Link <https://twitter.com/ONtransport/status/1297896604683427840?s=20>

Slow Down Move Over & Emergency Vehicles

Release Date August 17, 2020

Social Copy Slow down and move over when you see an emergency vehicle with their lights flashing, including tow trucks. It's the law. Learn more: <http://mto.gov.on.ca/english/safety/emergency-vehicles.shtml>

Shareable

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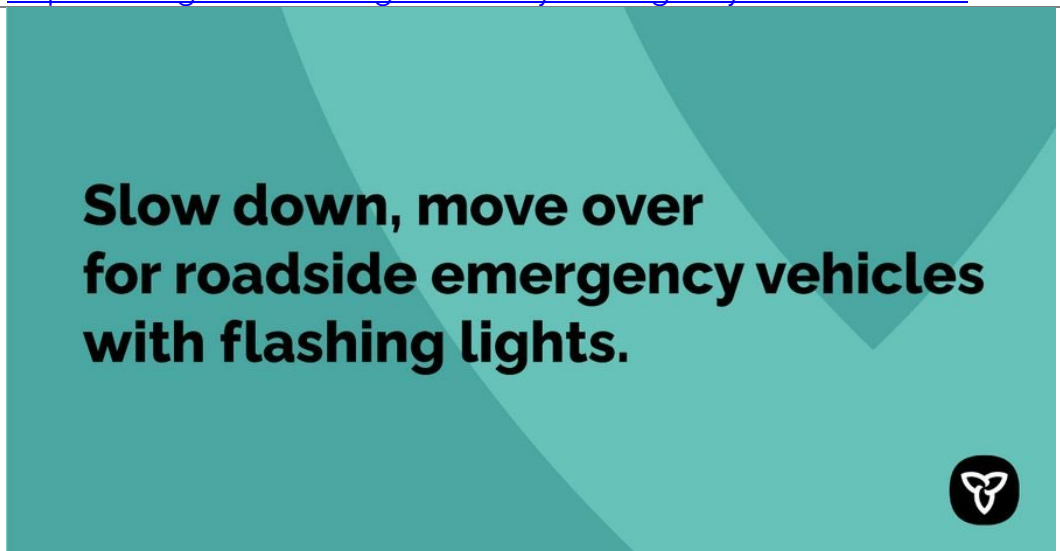
Link <https://twitter.com/ONtransport/status/1295359883773120514?s=20>

Release Date August 12, 2020

Social Copy Slow down and move over for emergency vehicles, including tow trucks, stopped on the side of the highway with their lights flashing. Drivers who fail to comply risk fines from \$490 to \$2,000 and three demerit points upon a first conviction. Learn more: <http://mto.gov.on.ca/english/safety/emergency-vehicles.shtml>

Shareable

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Link <https://twitter.com/ONtransport/status/1293623432588988418?s=20>

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